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BOSTON • Thursday, March 15, 2012

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Chair of Radiation Oncology,
Mass General/North Shore Cancer Center,
and Jennifer Flanagan, cancer survivor

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LETTERS@METRO.US

REPORTING LIVE FROM SXSW {page 15}

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BOSTON
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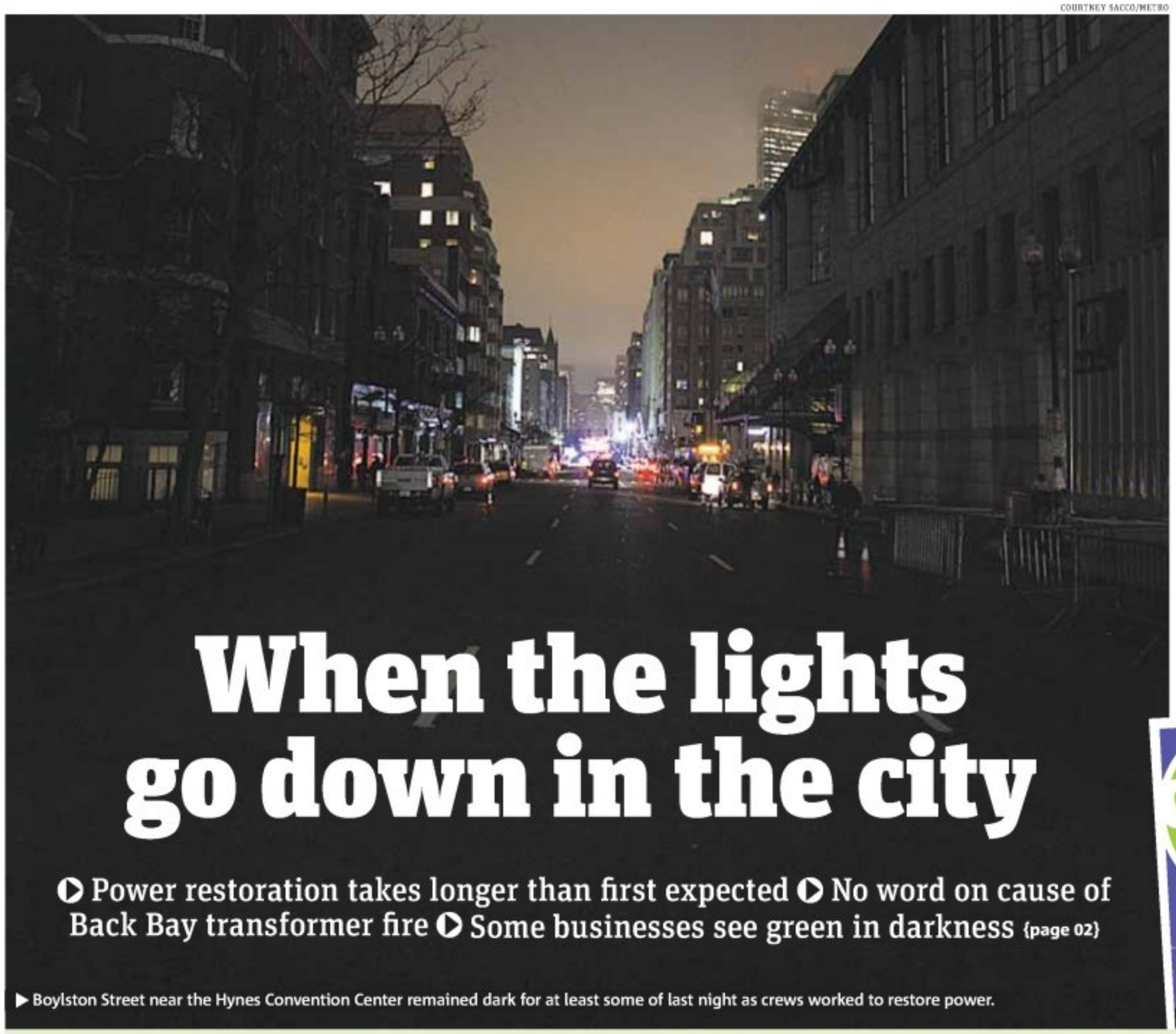

# When the lights go down in the city

Power restoration takes longer than first expected ◐ No word on cause of Back Bay transformer fire ◐ Some businesses see green in darkness {page 02}

▶ Boylston Street near the Hynes Convention Center remained dark for at least some of last night as crews worked to restore power.

News

## Buckled up? It's going to be a bumpy ride

◐ Santorum's Southern sweep puts end to any hopes of short campaign season ◐ Gingrich down, but won't quit {page 08}

## Test your skill on 'Community'

Go back to school and take our pop quiz on NBC's hit show {page 14}

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## In the news

**A-**

Massachusetts ranked fourth across the country, receiving an [A-minus] grade in a report released yesterday measuring how well states provide online access to information about government spending. METRO/SHNS

## Today's local tweet

""great.... so occupy Boston moves from camping out in the streets to occupying the MBTA so I can be harrased&annoyed on the way home"

@_PRIVATEJRYAN WHO WAS NOT IMPRESSED WITH THE GROUP'S EFFORT TO PROTEST FARE HIKES AND SERVICE CUTS.

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

▶ That butt may soon cost you more.

### Tobacco debate heats up

**MASSACHUSETTS.** Lawmakers and activists yesterday tried to rally support of smoking prevention programs and higher taxes on tobacco products.

At an event sponsored by the American Cancer Society, tobacco-use prevention supporters heard from legislators wanting to raise taxes on cigarettes while boosting funding for tobacco cessation programs.

Gov. Deval Patrick included a cigarette tax hike and taxes on other tobacco products in his new budget. METRO/SHNS

### 'Witch' item for sale

**SALEM.** Documents from the Salem Witch Trials won't be hanging around much longer.

A court indictment from one of the last victims hanged during the hysteria in 1692 is being sold today at Swann Auction Galleries in New York and is expected to net roughly $35,000.

The document is part of a private collection. METRO/BOSTON.COM

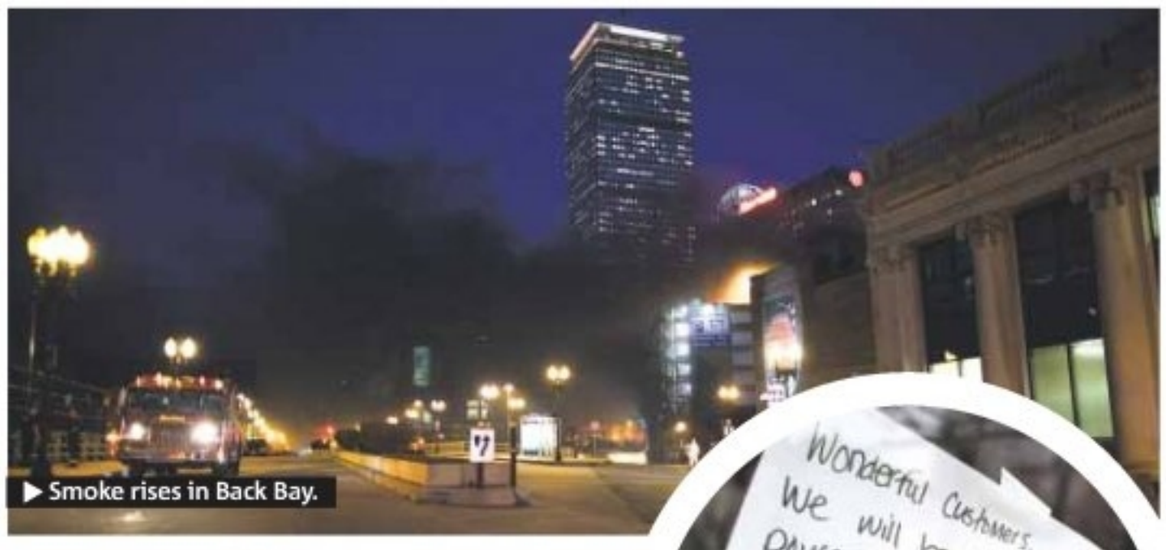
### Cambridge firm settles

**CAMBRIDGE.** A real estate business in Cambridge agreed to a settlement for allegedly violating state anti-discrimination and fair housing laws, the AG's office said yesterday.

Skyline Properties agreed to pay $5,000 to a family with young children who it allegedly discouraged from renting an apartment to avoid having to remove lead paint from it. METRO

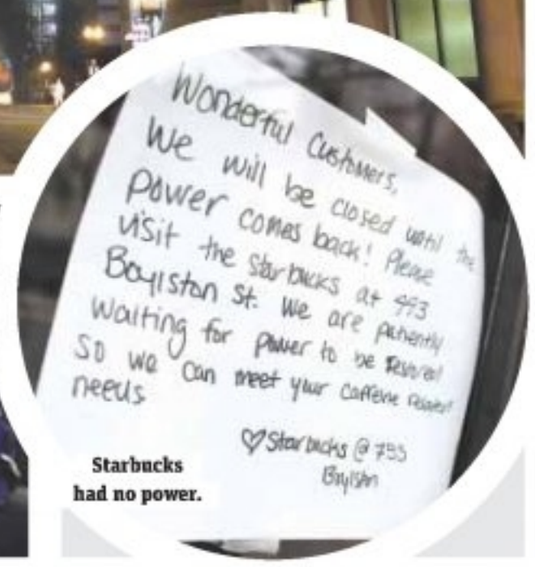
# Some businesses helped, others hurt by Back Bay blackout

**Restaurants try to salvage food before it perishes as electricity shuts power to freezers ◐ Some spend second night in dark, others get power**



▶ Smoke rises in Back Bay.

▶ Emergency workers were told to wear masks because of initial fears of harmful smoke.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Starbucks @ 755 Boylston

Starbucks had no power.

▶ The transformer building on the day after the fire.

PHOTOS: COURTNEY SACCO/METRO

Back Bay restaurants, hotels and businesses were reeling yesterday from Tuesday's generator explosion that caused widespread blackouts.

Many establishments were forced to close Tuesday night and into yesterday because of ongoing power outages, while others were scrambling to resume business as usual and cash in on the opportunity.

The Rattlesnake Bar and Grill and the Parish Cafe on Boylston Street, which were shuttered around 8 p.m. on Tuesday, were jammed with lunch patrons yesterday after gaining power back in the morning.

"Everyone is coming down to this end of Boylston," said Jay Gardner, owner of the Rattlesnake. "This is actually benefitting us."

Gardner said they lost a large function and had to clear out a full dining room after the fire on Tuesday. They worked through the night making sure food supplies didn't spoil by putting everything on dry ice, he said.

**"Everyone is coming down to this end of Boylston. This is actually benefitting us."**
JAY GARDNER, RATTLESNAKE BAR

Boston health inspectors visited all of the effected restaurants yesterday, from Back Bay to Chinatown, to make sure food was put on dry ice if the power was still off and to educate owners about the protocol for spoiled food disposal, said Lisa Timberlake, spokeswoman for the Boston Inspectional Services Department.

As of yesterday afternoon, no major citations had been issued, said Timberlake.

It is unclear at this point, what the economic loss will be to the scores of businesses that were forced to turn away customers over the past two days.

"When you think about the impact on the Hynes Convention Center, the restaurants and hotels, it's certainly going to have an impact. It's just too early to tell to what extent," said Charles Rudnick, vice president of communications for the Boston Chamber of Commerce.

### Restoration effort 'intensive'

While electricity was restored to some of the thousands of customers without power since Tuesday's transformer fire, other NStar customers went a second night without juice.

As of last night, the city provided an update that said it expected to have power restored to the Prudential and Copley Square area at 4 a.m. today.

At the height of the chaos, about 20,000 NStar customers were without power. That number was about 10,000 yesterday as crews scrambled to hook up some 50 generators throughout the neighborhood.

Joe Nolan, an NStar official, said yesterday that the work to turn the power back on is "labor intensive" and that the substation where the fire broke out was a critical one for the city.

CHRISTINA WALLACE
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# Some riders call public input a waste of time

COURTNEY SACCO/METRO

▶ A woman holds a sign that reads "The riders have spoken" during a rally before an MBTA board meeting yesterday.

The MBTA can't promise on-time trains, but they are guaranteeing riders that service cuts and fare increases are coming down the tracks.

A day after the last public hearing, where T-users blew their gaskets over the MBTA's proposals to close a massive budget gap, top transit officials penned a letter to constituents solidifying what everyone feared; both cuts and fare increases will have to happen in some capacity.

The news shook some riders' confidence that their outcries were heard.

"It's really frustrating. If they cared what we thought, they would do something. Why did they have us waste our breath?" said Tyree Ware, 20.

Ware said he feels like the T planned from the start to hold the meetings as part of a policy process, but never intended on using input from the public.

"It's kind of like 'Eff you, have a nice day,'" he said.

Hundreds of protesters joined Ware outside of the MBTA board of directors meeting yesterday to speak out one last time against plans to slash bus and train services.

But like Ware, others worried it was a waste of oxygen.

"You can stand in front of a microphone and talk, but not be heard," said Emily Feeney, 21.

Dylan Johnstone, 22, said no matter how many people showed up — roughly 6,000 during the course of the last several months — she was unsure if T officials listened.

"Where is the democracy in that," she said.

MBTA board of directors Chairman John Jenkins said the skepticism is untrue, however.

"We appreciate people coming out. They let us know how they felt, and we heard it," he said.

**STEVE ANNEAR**
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## Input didn't fall on deaf ears

Top T officials said not only have they heard riders, but they have listened to everything they have said in the last 31 meetings.

"The stark reality is, [we have] a $161 million deficit we have to fill," said interim GM Jon Davis. "But we have gotten some suggestions and ideas we may very well incorporate into our final recommendations."

Officials will create a "grid" of all proposals, including one from "The Fast Five" superheroes. **METRO/SA**

## Brewers bring brews to Beacon Hill

**BOSTON.** Massachusetts craft brewers, who have been working for passage of a bill they say would make it easier for them to distribute their products, planned to bring beer samples and locally catered food to the State House last night for a reception.

According to the Massachusetts Brewers Guild, craft beer samples from more than 25 breweries were made available in the Great Hall. A bill supported by the guild has been pending for months before the Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure. According to the guild, existing laws make it "nearly impossible" for brewers to move from wholesaler to wholesaler even if they're dissatisfied. **SHNS**

## Trial starts in stabbing death

**BOSTON.** A 25-year-old Dorchester man was arrested for allegedly stabbing another man when he returned to the murder scene to retrieve his knife.

Gregory Phillips, 24, was killed when he was stabbed in during a fight in 2009.

Prosecutors said during opening statements yesterday that he was stabbed by Corey Patterson.

The men were part of two different groups leaving the former Kells in Brighton.

Prosecutors said Patterson made a relative drive back to the scene to retrieve the knife that was used. **METRO**

# Whitey's gal pal pleads guilty, cries

## Catherine Greig pleads guilty to harboring fugitive Whitey Bulger ◗ Greig breaks down during her plea hearing ◗ Relative of alleged victim calls her 'cold'

James "Whitey" Bulger's longtime female companion pleaded guilty yesterday to federal crimes including hiding the alleged murderer and gangster from authorities for 16 years.

Catherine Greig, 60, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to harbor a fugitive, conspiracy to commit identity fraud and identity fraud during a hearing in federal court in South Boston. She could face up to 15 years in prison.

Dressed in a blue prison shirt and pants, Greig stood and said "guilty" when asked how she would plead to the charges.

▶ Greig

Family members briefed on the plea agreement by the U.S. attorney's office said they expected her to get about three years in prison and that she would not be asked to testify by prosecutors who are preparing to go to trial later this year in Bulger's case.

However, U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts Carmen Ortiz said that Greig could still be called to testify.

"There was no deal. Certainly no sweetheart deal," Ortiz said. "From the government's standpoint, Catherine Greig is no victim."

Greig briefly broke down during the hearing when the judge asked her about any mental health issues. She began to cry when she said she sought mental health treatment because of a family member's suicide in 1984.

That garnered no sympathy from the family members of Bulger's alleged murder victims who were in court for Greig's hearing.

"She's cold. She's a monster," said Steven Davis, whose sister, Debra, was allegedly killed by Bulger. "She doesn't deserve a break."

Greig will be sentenced June 12. Bulger's trial is slated to start in November.

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
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**Justice.** State House

▶ A supporter of the bill held up her hand with the word "enough" written on it during a State House rally.

COURTNEY SACCO/METRO

## Child protection advocates rally

**Supporters of a bill that would eliminate the statute of limitations for sexual abuse crimes against children made a push for their case at the State House yesterday. The group visited legislators' offices and handed out hundreds of copies of a book on preventing child abuse.** METRO

## Quincy man pleads guilty in stabbing death

**BOSTON.** A former South Boston man who was previously convicted of murder twice, only to have those cases thrown out, pleaded guilty yesterday to fatally stabbing a man in a neighborhood bar 15 years ago.

Joseph Downey, 46, most recently of Quincy, pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter, according to the Suffolk district attorney's office. He was sentenced to between 17 and 20 years in state prison.

Downey and his brother allegedly attacked James Murphy inside Kelly's Cork and Bull after getting into a fight. His brother pleaded guilty.

Downey was convicted in 1999, but that case was thrown out because his lawyers secretly wore microphones for a British television show. He was again convicted later on, but that was also thrown out because the judge had improperly closed the courtroom during jury selection. METRO

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# Alleged shooter of 16 Afghans flown out of country by US

The U.S. soldier who allegedly shot and killed at least 16 Afghan civilians has been flown out of the country, according to a Pentagon spokesman.

The staff sergeant, whose name was being withheld by the military until charges are filed, was flown to a non-European country other than the U.S., the spokesman, Navy Capt. John Kirby, said today.

The soldier was moved "because we don't have the type of detention facility in Afghanistan to hold a U.S. service member for any length of time," Kirby said in an interview. "The detention facilities in Afghanistan are intended for enemy combatants. Our own regulations and policies don't allow us to keep a U.S. service member there."

**"We don't have the type of detention facility in Afghanistan to hold a U.S. service member for any length of time."**
NAVY CAPT. JOHN KIRBY

The Afghan civilians, including women and children, were killed in attacks that threaten to further erode tense U.S.-Afghan relations, drain remaining U.S. and European support for the war and add pressure to speed troop withdrawals ahead of the security handover now set for 2014. BLOOMBERG

**Belgium.** Crash

▶ The bus, which was carrying 52 passengers, was travelling from Val d'Anniviers toward the Swiss town of Sion on the A9 highway when the accident happened. The passengers were returning to Belgium from a skiing trip.

GETTY IMAGES

## Bus crash kills 28, mostly children

A bus carrying a Belgian school party home from a ski trip crashed into the wall of a tunnel in Switzerland late on Tuesday, killing 28 people, mostly children. Distraught parents, many of whom still did not know if their children were among the 22 pupils killed, gathered at a school in Belgium to be flown to Switzerland on military aircraft. REUTERS

## Encyclopaedia Britannica drops print edition after 244 years

In yet another sign of the growing dominance of the digital publishing market, the oldest English-language encyclopedia still in print is moving solely into the digital age.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica, which has been in continuous print since it was first published in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1768, said it will end publication of its printed editions and continue with digital versions available online.

The flagship, 32-volume printed edition, available every two years, was sold for $1,400. An online subscription costs around $70 per year and the company recently launched a set of apps ranging between $1.99 and $4.99 per month.

The company said it will keep selling print editions until the current stock of around 4,000 sets ran out. REUTERS

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CHRISTOPHER CRECOBY/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Rick Santorum campaigns in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. But does he have a real chance at seizing the momentum to win nomination? Let us know what you think at letters@metro.us.

# What's next for the GOP?

**For complaints, suggestions and digital attaboys, e-mail us at brayden.simms@metro.us.**

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The results of Tuesday's Deep South primary contests in Mississippi and Alabama confirm what many political analysts had probably already assumed: It's going to be a long, nasty election season, folks.

Rick Santorum emerged a surprise victor in mainland competitions on Tuesday, winning both Southern states despite organizational and monetary disadvantages compared with front-runner Mitt Romney. But the victories, while nice, ultimately proved hollow: Proportional delegate allocation (in which the three top contenders, having ended the close night mere percentage points apart, will each receive a similar share of the spoils), combined with Romney wins in two low-profile races in Hawaii and American Samoa, conspired to crown the more moderate contender the true winner of the day. Romney scooped up the most (estimated) delegates of the night, muddling the Santorum surge and reinforcing the mathematical reality that his substantial (estimated) delegate lead will line the path to his nomination.

Then there's Newt Gingrich, whose second-place finishes on Tuesday invalidate his so-called Southern strategy, predicated on the historian's ability to sweep the more conservative U.S. states. The feisty former Georgia congressman failed to deliver wins in the region presumed to be most receptive to his patented big ideas — like moon colonization and helping poor children by giving them jobs cleaning schools. Regardless, Gingrich reiterated his intentions to stay in the race all the way, posing a serious threat to Santorum's prospects, which fare much better given a one-on-one battle with Romney.

OK, but where does that leave us? Well, the same place we were before, mostly. Despite his losses Tuesday, Romney's math argument, while not exactly inspirational, does hold a certain unassailable logic: Unless something big happens to change the race's dynamics — like, for instance, Gingrich deciding to suck it up and drop out — it remains unlikely for Santorum to top Romney in delegates. And, again, the name of the game is 1,144; any candidate that reaches this number of delegates will automatically be declared the Republican presidential nominee. Estimates put Romney way out in front.

There's another possibility, though less remote. If none of the candidates hits the magic 1,144 number, the nomination will go to a brokered convention, where party leaders will be forced to decide the nominee themselves. This is the outcome Gingrich favors. "I believe that after the primaries are over it will be obvious the so-called front-runner in fact didn't get there, and from that point we will be in a whole different conversation," Gingrich said in defeat. A conversation, presumably, involving child janitors and space fantasies.

*Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages.*

## GET FED

**Because sometimes there's no time for much more than skimming headlines.**

- "Mitt Romney: Winning, But Not Getting More Popular" **BASEBALLCRANK.COM**
- "Actually, American Samoa Is Usually the Way the Nation Goes" **THE ATLANTIC WIRE**
- "That big Obama poll drop? It never happened" **THE PLUM LINE**
- "Romney Trying to Make Victory Slog Inspiring" **DAILY INTEL**
- "Obama's personal role in a journalist's imprisonment" **SALON**
- "The moment Mitt's been dreading" **SALON**
- "The Great TARP Cover-Up" **REASON MAGAZINE**
- "Mitt Romney muddles on" **POLITICO**
- "Judge rules voter ID law is unconstitutional; permanently bars implementation" **MADISON.COM**
- "Barack Obama's New One-Click Fundraising Trick" **TIME**

**Delegate estimates**

SOURCE: WALL STREET JOURNAL

Gingrich

**131**

Santorum

**252**

Romney

**495**


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| Landscaper | $7.64 | $38.20 | $1,910.00 |
| Lawyer | $27.50 | $137.50 | $6,875.00 |
| Mechanic | $8.93 | $44.65 | $2,232.50 |
| Nurse | $21.44 | $107.20 | $5,360.00 |
| Pharmacist | $25.23 | $126.15 | $6,307.50 |
| Plumber | $14.35 | $71.75 | $3,587.50 |
| Police Officer | $13.78 | $68.90 | $3,445.00 |
| Psychologist | $21.50 | $107.50 | $5,375.00 |
| Retail Salesperson | $5.31 | $26.55 | $1,327.50 |
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# Blago makes final pitch before prison

## Convicted of federal corruption, ex-Illinois governor begins sentence today Still has 'faith in the future'

Former Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich yesterday used his final public appearance before reporting to prison to defend his political actions and express confidence that his conviction on federal corruption charges will ultimately be overturned.

Blagojevich called his looming 14-year prison sentence, which starts today, a "dark and hard journey," but said he would draw strength from his belief that he had "helped real, ordinary people" during his years in office.

"We still have faith in the future," Blagojevich told the crowd of about 300 people who gathered outside his home on Chicago's northside to hear his final statement, which was timed precisely to coincide with 5 p.m. local time news shows.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Blagojevich

"We are appealing the case," Blagojevich said with his tearful wife Patti at his side. "We have great trust and faith in the appeal and while my faith in things has sometimes been challenged, I still believe this is America, this is a country that is governed by the rule of law," he said.

Blagojevich was arrested in his northside home by the FBI on the morning of Dec. 9, 2008, on political corruption charges, including an allegation that he conspired to sell the Senate seat vacated by President Barack Obama in return for political favors and donations.

Three years and two trials later, Blagojevich was convicted of political corruption and U.S. District Court Judge James Zagel sentenced the two-term governor and father of two daughters to 14 years in prison for corruption. **REUTERS**

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**Tech.** Tablet computers

▶ Apple unveiled the new iPad on March 7.

GETTY IMAGES

## Apple to sell 65.6M iPads in 2012

**Apple Inc. is seeing record preorders for its latest iPad with wait times for shipping the tablet now reaching two to three weeks, said Canaccord Genuity analysts, who now expect the company to sell 65.6 million iPads this year. Last week, Apple introduced the highly anticipated third iteration of the iPad, which will hit store shelves Friday. REUTERS**

## Up to the jury in Rutgers case

**NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J.** A jury yesterday began deciding whether Dharun Ravi committed a hate crime when he used a webcam to spy on his college roommate Tyler Clementi kissing another man in a case that put a national spotlight on gay bullying when Clementi committed suicide days later.

Terms like "tweeting," "IM" and "texting" are part of the evidence that the panel of 12 jurors must weigh to decide whether to convict Ravi, a former Rutgers University student, of any of the 15 counts of invasion of privacy, witness tampering and bias intimidation, which is a hate crime. **REUTERS**

## 50%

**For the first time since early July, 2011, more Americans approve of the job President Barack Obama is doing than disapprove, according to a new Reuters-Ipsos poll that shows his approval rating now at 50 percent.**

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# Civilian killings hurt Afghan war support from Americans

Forty percent of Americans said the shooting spree by a U.S. soldier stationed in Afghanistan which resulted in the deaths of 16 villagers had weakened their support for the war, a poll showed yesterday.

Sixty-one percent of Americans surveyed in the March 12-13 online poll by Reuters/Ipsos said the remaining U.S. troops should be brought home immediately, down slightly from the 66 percent who expressed that opinion in a similar poll from early March. Seventeen percent disagreed.

The Obama administration is seeking to contain the fallout from the shocking shooting on Sunday, in which a U.S. staff sergeant walked off his base in southern Afghanistan and shot the 16 civilians, mostly women and children, in a nearby village.

Coming on the heels of violent outcry in Afghanistan triggered by U.S. soldiers' burning of copies of the Koran on a NATO military base, the shooting underscores the challenges the United States and its NATO allies face in the country, where, after more than 10 years of war, the Taliban remains a potent enemy. **REUTERS**

### Iran war support

**A majority of Americans would support military action against Iran if there were evidence that Tehran is building nuclear weapons, even if such action led to higher gasoline prices, a Reuters/Ipsos poll showed on Tuesday.**

SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

▶ A U.S. Marine watches as an Osprey carrying U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta arrives yesterday at Forward Operating Base Shukvani, Afghanistan.

## Murdoch son pleads innocence

**LONDON.** James Murdoch made a last-ditch appeal to a parliamentary committee investigating phone-hacking at his company, ahead of a report expected from the committee in coming weeks that could determine whether he has a future in Britain.

The committee, which hauled James and his father Rupert before it for a three-hour grilling in July, is expected to criticize the younger Murdoch for failing to uncover the scale of the problem, threatening his role as chairman of pay-TV group BSkyB.

In a seven-page letter, the 39-year-old apologized to those affected but said he had been let down by senior staff on whom he had relied, allowing a scandal to escalate. **REUTERS**

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# THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip @dorothyatmetro dorothy.robinson@metro.us

## Lohan in trouble with the law again

It's been, what? A hot minute since **Lindsay Lohan** hasn't been in trouble with the law?

Her days-long winning streak is seemingly coming to an end after allegedly hitting a man with her brand new black Porsche and fleeing the scene in Hollywood late Tuesday night, according to TMZ. Lohan was reportedly trying to execute a three-point turn and avoid paparazzi while leaving a nightclub when her car made contact with the manager of a nearby hookah lounge. The manager, whose knee was supposedly grazed, initially said he was fine and didn't need medical attention, according to paparazzi on the scene. But when he was informed that Lohan was behind the wheel, he reportedly began complaining about being injured. The man was taken to the emergency room and is said to be considering hiring a lawyer and pressing charges. Police sources tell the website that they will open a hit-and-run investigation if the man decides to press charges.

▶ Uh-oh! Lohan could be in trouble yet again.

### Theron adopts baby boy

Welcome to motherhood, **Charlize Theron**!

A rep for the Oscar-winning actress, 36, tells The Associated Press in a Wednesday statement: "Charlize Theron has adopted a child. She is the proud mom of a healthy baby boy named Jackson."

No further details were provided about the single star's unexpected baby news.

### Lawrence is getting used to Hollywood

**Jennifer Lawrence** isn't in a hurry to make any enemies in Hollywood, so when a tabloid story suggested she was feuding with "Twilight" star **Kristen Stewart**, the "Hunger Games" star did everything she could to quash it. "There were all these like, fake quotes from me that were actually hilarious. Some of them were from my 'pal' and 'sources,'" Lawrence tells Access Hollywood. "Then I was like, 'Oh my God. If she reads this, what if she thinks it's true?' I just shot her an e-mail, and was like, 'Hey, can't wait to see more as this feud unfolds!'" Stewart, no stranger to being tabloid fodder, took it in stride. "She wrote me back," says Lawrence. "She was like, 'It's fine. Welcome to the world where everything you say gets turned into [something it's not].' So, she understood."

Smart girl. The last person I'd want to get into a fight with is Kristen Stewart. I bet she fights dirty.

Lawrence

### The feed ...

▶ Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

Miley Cyrus is on the road again, Faye Dunaway has no interest in being realistic, Ricky Martin thinks you should laugh more and Garry Shandling has more important questions on his mind.

**@MileyCyrus**
Road trip with mommy :) country music blarin!!!! "It's momm-mmmy time!"

**@RealFayeDunaway**
Being realistic is the most common path to mediocrity.

**@ricky_martin**
If you wake up without a sense of humor, go back to sleep and start your day again.

**@GarryShandling**
Forget about arguing when life begins. First, let's find 2 people who agree on when the sex actually starts.

Martin

### Talking points

#### Barrymore is acting pregnant

**Drew Barrymore** hasn't responded to rumors that she and fiance **Will Kopelman** are expecting a child — but she's not doing anything to dispel them. In fact, showing up at a lunch meeting at a restaurant carrying her own box of Saltine crackers — a morning sickness-combating staple — as Barrymore did this week probably doesn't help prove pregnancy-watchers wrong. Last month, the couple was spotted leaving a doctor's office with a sonogram printout in hand.

#### Will Perry write a tell-all?

**Katy Perry** has reportedly been flooded with offers to write a tell-all book about her divorce from **Russell Brand**, with one publisher offering $3.1 million for the story, according to the Sun. There's no word on whether she's considering the offer, but some speculate that her recent silence seems suspect. "When everything was going well, Katy couldn't stop talking about him," a source notes. "Since the split, neither of them have said anything — keeping the price of a deal high."

#### Harry goes back to the Apache

▶ Anderson

It looks like his recent celebration-packed tour of the Caribbean and Brazil was the last hurrah for **Prince Harry** for a while, as the British royal reportedly has been told to knock off the fun and get back to his Apache helicopter training, according to the Sun. "Harry has been told that his whole life is now dedicated to the Apache. He's been told that he can't spend every spare moment down the pub and can't risk spending more time on another royal tour," a source says. "Harry has taken those orders on board and assured the people who need to know that he will knuckle down and give absolutely everything to the final weeks of his Apache training."

#### Anderson on experimenting

"X-Files" star **Gillian Anderson** confirms to Out magazine that she's no stranger to same-sex romance. "I was in a relationship with a girl for a long time when I was in high school," the 43-year-old actress says. "You know, I'm old enough that I can talk about that." Anderson acknowledges that the dalliances might have had a bigger impact on her had they played a bigger role in her romantic life. "If I had thought I was 100 percent gay, would it have been a different experience for me?" she wonders. "It's possible that my attitude around it came, on some level, from knowing that I still liked boys."

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# Clooney goes to Washington while Cube hits up '21 Jump Street'

**1. George Clooney** arrived alongside **John Prendergast**, co-founder of the Satellite Sentinel Project, prior to testifying on Sudan and South Sudan before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday.

**2.** Actress **Michelle Williams** attended the Marilyn Monroe Retrospective Exhibition at Daikanyama Tsutaya Bookstore on Wednesday in Tokyo, Japan.

**3. Ice Cube** arrived at the premiere of Columbia Pictures' "21 Jump Street" at the Grauman's Chinese Theater on Tuesday in Los Angeles.

**4.** "Missing" star **Ashley Judd** attended Meet the Actor: Ashley Judd at the Apple Store in SoHo on Tuesday in New York City.

**5.** Pregnant or no? **Drew Barrymore** was sighted leaving a "Rasa Yoga" class on Wednesday in Paris.

**6. Elle McPherson**, designer **John Varvatos** and **Nicole Richie** attended a party to celebrate their new NBC series, "Fashion Star," at Macy's Herald Square on Tuesday in New York City.

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# Can you spot 'Community' plot or not?

LEWIS JACOBS/NBC

▶ It's not surprising to see the Greendale campus turned into the setting for a Wild West showdown on "Community." The series returns tonight at 8 on NBC.

The off-the-wall study group at Greendale Community College is back in session tonight. In honor of the absurd sitcom's return, we've put together this pop quiz on some of the strangest, funniest episodes. Can you spot the fake storylines?

**1** Attendees of the Greendale Halloween party turn into zombies. Troy (Donald Glover) saves the day by turning on the air conditioning, which breaks the "fever." The army arrives and erases everyone's memories.

**2** The campus is turned into an apocalyptic wasteland after a paintball war breaks out.

**3** At Troy and Abed's (Danny Pudi) housewarming party, Jeff (Joel McHale) assigns a number to his six friends; they agree to roll a die to determine who will meet the pizza guy at the door. This results in Pierce (Chevy Chase) getting shot and Britta (Gillian Jacobs) starting a fire.

**4** Jeff tips off Chang (Ken Jeong) that the Greendale glee club is illegally performing copyrighted songs; the singers are served with a cease-and-desist order. For the holiday pageant to go on as planned, the glee instructor uses mind control to get the study group to participate.

**5** Annie (Alison Brie) breaks Abed's limited edition "The Dark Knight" DVD and lies, saying that it's been stolen. Batman himself investigates.

**AMBER RAY**
amber.ray@metro.us

## Answer key

**1.** The "zombie" fever was caused by supplies Dean Pelton (Jim Rash) bought at an army surplus store in Ep. 6, Season 2: "Epidemiology."
**2.** Greendale's annual paintball game turns serious after Pelton announces the prize — priority class registration — in "Modern Warfare" (Ep. 23, Season 1). The episode inspired the sequels "A Fistful of Paintballs" and "For a Few Paintballs More," the two-part Season 2 finale.
**3.** The entire episode explores the alternate universes that result from different rolls of the die in "Remedial Chaos Theory" (Ep. 4, Season 3).
**4.** "Regional Holiday Music" (Ep. 10, Season 3) was a "Glee" spoof.
**5.** In "Foosball and Nocturnal Vigilantism" (Ep. 9, Season 3), we also discover Shirley (Yvette Nicole Brown) once bullied Jeff so badly when they were kids that Jeff wet his pants.

Yes, these zany storylines are all part of the goofy joy in watching "Community."


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# Can Kasabian conquer America?

SXSW 2012

PAT HEALY
PAT.HEALY@METRO.US

GETTY IMAGES

▶ This is not America. This is Kasabian playing a packed show in Leeds. Kasabian play the much smaller House of Blues on March 27.

Tom Meighan arrives with a bodyguard in a black SUV with tinted windows. The Kasabian singer is a superstar in his home country, but in Austin, Texas, at the SXSW Music Conference, he is afforded the luxury of anonymity.

Plopping down on a couch in the lobby of the Radisson Hotel, he wonders aloud if American popular music will ever experience another British invasion.

"This obsession about breaking in America isn't really happening anymore for English bands," he says, scratching his unshaven neck. "It's kind of gone, isn't it?"

But not for Kasabian. With their September-released "Velociraptor!", the band is touring the U.S. for the first time in five years.

"You can get carried away with the arenas back in England," he says. "Here, it feels like we're 21 again, starting over."

A lot about Kasabian feels like starting over. "Velociraptor!" is a cleaner sound than the band's Brit-pop past, filled with funky grooves and fun lyrics.

Meighan says "Let's Roll Like We Used To" is about when he and Kasabian cofounder Sergio Pizzorno "used to smoke jazz cigarettes and wander through the fields," while the song "Rewired" is "about being naughty in a hotel room."

"We'll always keep reinventing ourselves," says Meighan. "Our next album, I said to Serge, we'll probably put eight songs on it and every song will be two minutes long, and it will be a whole electronic album with no guitars. I don't know."

## Monkey brain brainstorm

**One of the first indications that "Velociraptor!" doesn't take itself seriously is toward the end of the second song, "Days Are Forgotten," where Meighan talks about chewing a monkey brain. What?**

"'Chewing a monkey brain' comes from 'Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom.' He says, 'chilled monkey brain,' not 'chew.' I always had an obsession with making my own words. The only person who got it was my brother, because I used to say it as a kid."


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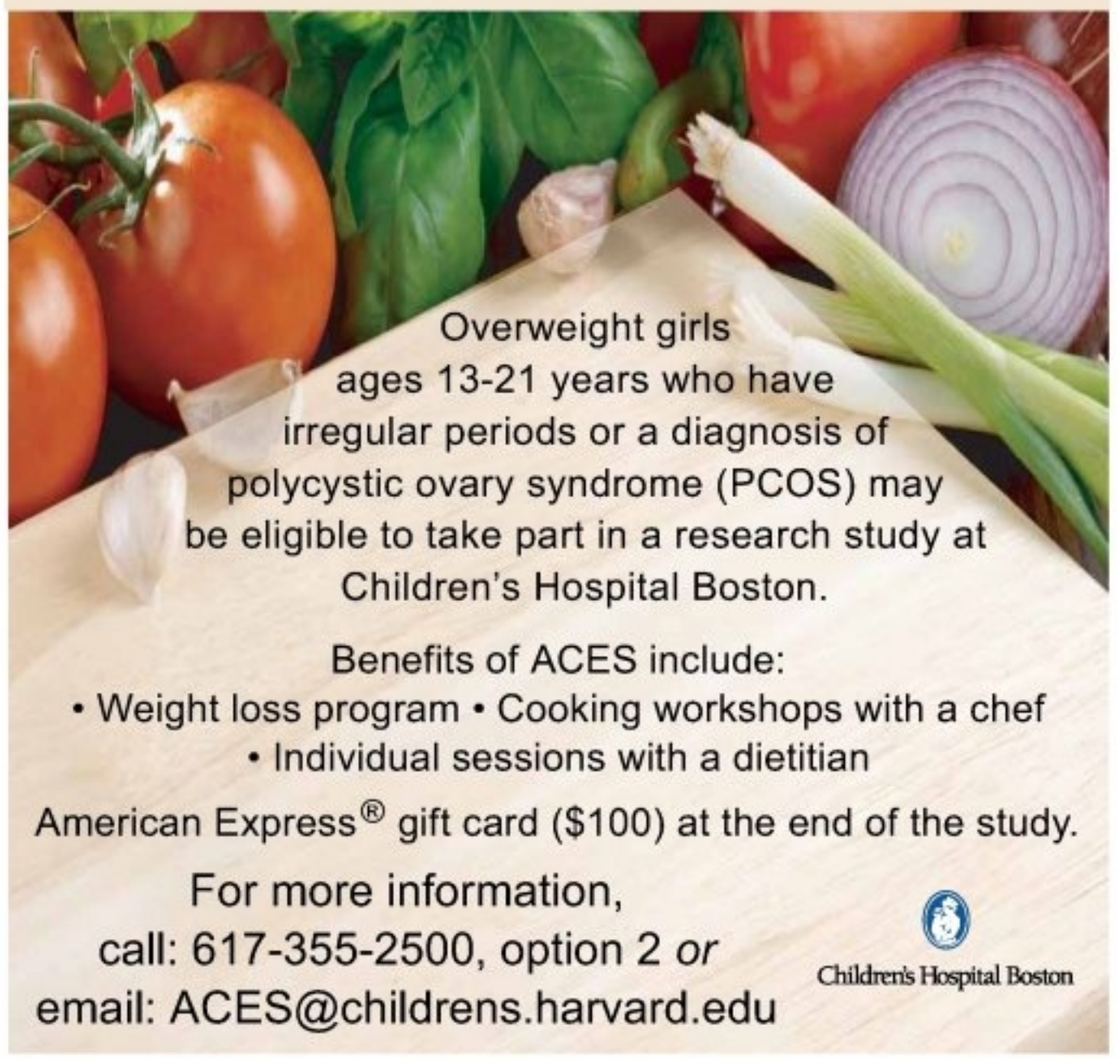

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▶ *Dear Buddy, Don't let the man get you down. May the wind always be at your back. Have a Happy St. Patrick's Day! Te amo mucho. Love always, Cindy (Your Boo)*

# When it's time for an apology

**It isn't just reserved for the times you know you're wrong It can also help smooth over a tricky circumstance It shows you empathize with your partner**

WAVEBREAK MEDIA

▶ Squabbles are going to happen. Be sure to talk with — not at — your partner and consider offering up an "I'm sorry."

Rumors are swirling that Rihanna and Chris Brown might reunite. She has said publicly that being single is overrated, but there has to be more to it than that. I would assume that a heartfelt apology from Brown about his reported physical abuse that led to their breakup years ago played a big part. So how much power can an apology have? Of course, physical abuse is the extreme, and there is no question that an apology was vital in that case, but what about smaller transgressions?

There are many things that can make one partner or the other angry and upset: He forgot to call, she was late and left him waiting, he promised to do an errand but got caught up at work. When couples sit down to talk about these issues, so often they simply talk at each other. "How could you forget to mail my invitations?" one will ask. "How can you not understand that my boss needed me and then the post office was closed?" the other will counter. In these situations, there is no attempt to consider the other person's feelings or show any empathy. If this sounds familiar, it might be time to consider offering an apology.

People think of an apology as an assertion of wrongdoing. Think of it instead as a healing balm to soothe your partner's upset feelings. You had every intention of mailing those invitations. You may feel that the outcome was out of your control. Lots of times we do or don't do things that hurt our partner's feelings because we believe that we had no other option at the time, and it was in no way intentional. But you can still be sorry that your partner's feelings were ruffled. Once the apology is offered and the wronged party feels heard and understood, you can then, hopefully without anger, get your communication back on track and discuss what happened so that you might prevent it from happening again.

An apology is a declaration of caring about your partner's feelings. It can be the key to reconnecting.

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*— Relationship expert* ***Dr. Jane Greer*** *is the creator of* ***"Shrink Wrap"*** *– national commentary on what we can learn from celebrity relationships – and host of* ***"Let's Talk Sex"*** *at* ***Healthylife.net.*** *Her book,* ***"What About Me? Stop Selfishness From Ruining Your Relationship,"*** *is available nationwide.*

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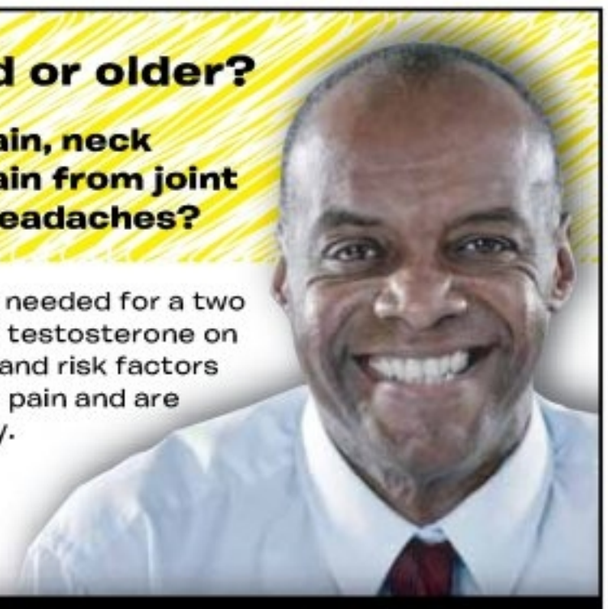

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# Letters

letters@metro.us

## Obama's albatross: Race to the bottom?

**RE: "WHAT'S BRINGING OBAMA DOWN?":** Our wonderful president has done an amazingly great job since taking our nation's highest office. He unfortunately gets credited with economic problems he did not create, but inherited. President Obama has remained diligent and is making progress by addressing the U.S. economy. I never liked answers cloaked in cliche, however this is the one time I would accept the answer of: "It's because I'm black right?"

**RONALD CARTER, VIA E-MAIL**

It's obvious that our president's popularity decline reverts back to his color. It is sad that we Americans always want to point the finger and pull the race card, but not once have the media really praised this man for what he has accomplished in less than four years. Soldiers and their families need to thank him for bringing them home.

**TONDALAYA HARRIS, VIA E-MAIL**

I think the American people need to give Obama a chance again. There is no way that he can possibly turn a whole country around when there are people who lost faith in him because he couldn't give them a job the next day. People keep blaming him for what Congress has their hands in, and that's not right.

**ASHLEY ALLARD, VIA E-MAIL**

## Respect is earned, not taken by force

**RE: "SHOW SOME RESPECT FOR OTHERS' BELIEFS":** Mr. Rivera bemoans a lack of tolerance for Bible-based beliefs? Newsflash: Nobody is persecuting Christians for their beliefs. They are simply being called out for using the Bible — a text that's been used for ages to justify war, slavery and a thousand other terrible things — to excuse their petty hatreds. All of us would do better following the words of a young carpenter from Nazareth, rather than vague passages from the Old Testament.

**JOSEPH CONNELL, VIA E-MAIL**

You ask why we can't show the same respect for Christianity that we do to other beliefs and lifestyles. Well, we'd love to — but unfortunately Christians won't stop polluting our schools and politics, and they continue to work to take away the rights and freedoms of other beliefs and lifestyles based on their personal religious motivations. If you want respect, be respectful. Stop forcing others to live by your belief structure.

**KIERA CAPEHART, VIA E-MAIL**

Our Founding Fathers wanted a separation of Church and State as a way to protect against persecution and discrimination. It was not the intent to create a nation unto itself to break the Law of the Land, which is derived from the will of the people. If our country believes a woman has the right to choose and can have an abortion, it is legal. If the Law of the Land now states that all insurance providers must offer contraceptive care, that law has to be upheld — with no excuses. Never was the separation of Church and State meant to circumvent the Law of the Land. If you don't like the laws, then you have the liberty to change them by democratic means.

**DAVID DIBELLO, VIA E-MAIL**

E-mail your letters: **letters@metro.us**

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words.
Metro reserves the right to edit all letters.
Please include your name and contact information.

## Horoscope

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** Financial trends could be rather unstable. In situations where things are running smoothly, don't turn around and behave in ways that nullify everything you've gained.

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** Unless you're careful, you could put yourself in a position where you unknowingly begin operating against your best interest. Don't be your own worst enemy.

♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** Your luck does have its limitations, so be careful not to press it too far; for example, don't attempt to use it as a replacement for honest effort.

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** If you fail to control events, they will end up dominating you. Unless you devise a sensible game plan and stick to it, you'll be tossed and turned by the unforgiving winds of circumstance.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** Although you are likely to be fortunate where your material interests are concerned, this luck isn't apt to spill over into the realm of reputation. Be careful regarding your self-image.

♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** As long as you can treat whatever happens philosophically, it should be a good day for you. Lose your cool or overreact in any way, and you could suffer some negative consequences.

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** Strive to be as fair to yourself as you are with others. After all, you're entitled to the same consideration as everyone is and if you don't give it to yourself, no one else will.

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** If you team up with a partner, be sure it's someone who behaves as you do. You will be accountable for your counterpart's tactics and behavior, and you'll share the results as well.

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** Your objectives can be achieved, provided that you select a partner who envisions the end result the same way you do. If he or she sees things differently, it could be a bad scene.

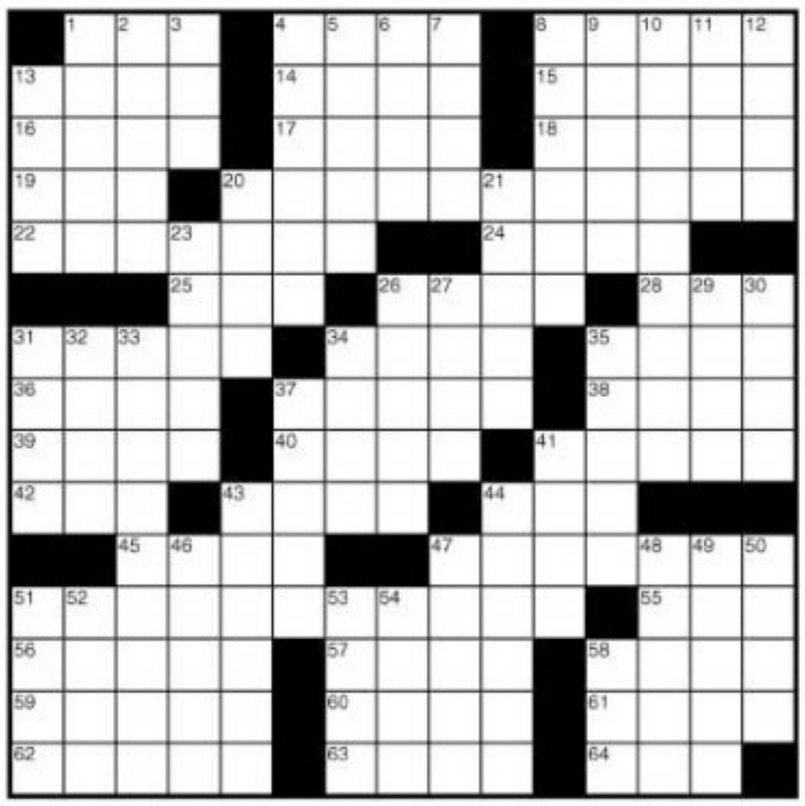
♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** If you're planning a get-together with friends, invite only those who mix well with one another. Anyone who doesn't could spoil everyone else's good time.

♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** There are ample opportunities surrounding you, yet you could be oblivious to them. If you can't or won't recognize them, you will only have yourself to blame.

♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** It's always important to treat everyone with whom you're involved as courteously and amicably as possible. Be careful that you don't kowtow to the big shots while disrespecting everyone else. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

**Across**
1 Dernier __
4 Hansoms
8 Look happy
13 Satyr
14 Black-and-white snack
15 Marge Simpson's hubby
16 Like limes
17 __ Thomas of clocks
18 Pinnacles
19 Chinese dynasty 2,000 years ago
20 Earth's crust
22 Drat!
24 Israel's Golda
25 __ Dawn Chong
26 Membership fees
28 Close kin
31 "The Thinker" sculptor
34 Bodybuilder's rep
35 Candy striper
36 Livy contemporary
37 Dromedary
38 North or South
39 Porgy's woman
40 Ant horde
41 Poker pair
42 Eur. nation
43 "__ __, old chap"
44 Vitamin amt.
45 Declaim violently
47 Wife-to-be
51 Largest sea turtle
55 Summer forecast
56 Bauxite giant
57 Apiece
58 Say in fun
59 Conch
60 Wee parasite
61 Racer __ Luyendyk
62 Move crabwise
63 Sioux
64 Pink lady ingredient

**Down**
1 Chocolate tree
2 Weeping over
3 Wabash loc.
4 Trig function
5 Mountain ridge
6 Jo's sister
7 London district
8 Molds
9 Japanese rice cake
10 Dunking
11 Nasty look
12 Gaelic
13 Saudi royal name
20 Give credit
21 Take a whiff
23 Power systems
26 Mannequin
27 Heavy hydrogen discoverer
29 Run in neutral
30 Social insects
31 Judge's garb
32 Type of mitt
33 Out of favor
34 Dear, in Venice
35 Concerning hives
37 Hindu social class
41 Fargo's st.
43 Fill the lungs
44 Treasures
46 Lagoon boundary
47 Ipso __
48 Darling, in Dijon
49 Lab slide dye
50 Feminine suffix
51 Bonny miss
52 Pre-college
53 San __(Riviera resort)
54 Cheese in a trap
58 Ruin a nylon



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SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

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SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

**Solution to yesterday's crossword**

**How to play Sudoku:** Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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hot tickets

Retro pop-rockers talk about a beautiful Southern lake and not-as-disgusting-as-it-sounds 'meth beach' of Philly Why two tourmates became bandmates

# DR. DOG
## DAY AFTERNOON

There are at least two songs in the rock canon that name check Lake Charles, La.: Lucinda Williams' "Lake Charles" and The Band's "Cripple Creek." Dr. Dog singer Scott McMicken ponders that lake on a sunny, late winter's day, while struck by its beauty. Does he feel a song coming on?

"I don't think I've earned the right to write a song about it," he tells Metro humbly. "Maybe one day." While you'd think the Philadelphia-based retro pop-rockers to be Yankees through and through, McMicken says he has an affinity for the South. "I love the general air down here. It's one of our best areas for touring."

Growing up in rural Pennsylvania not far from the Delaware border puts him in a North/South gray area, but he says his heart now belongs to Philly, even though the band has experienced the city's worst aspects. Their studio, for instance, is called Meth Beach for a reason.

"It's in a troubled part of Philly called Kensington," says McMicken. "When we moved into our studio, there had been a meth lab across the street, and it exploded and set fire to the building. For some reason, there was a busted old boat nearby and there was the distinct feel of the beach. There are beautiful sunsets and seagulls from the Delaware River; it felt like a beach."

**No 'Shame'**

In between Dr. Dog's 2010 album "Shame, Shame" and their February-released "Be The Void," the quintet expanded to a six-piece, adding multi-instrumentalist Dimitri Manos and swapping in new drummer Eric Slick.

"We had a lot of time playing together on tour before we made 'The Void.' We really settled in together," says McMicken. "Those guys went from stepping in to replicate what we did on 'Shame' to developing the music."

LINDA LABAN
linda.laban@metro.us

CHRIS CHRISMAN

**If you go**

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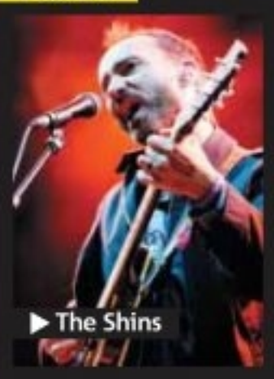
▶ Dr. Dog are, from left, Dimitri Manos, Frank McElroy, Scott McMicken, Zach Miller, Toby Leaman and Eric Slick.

**Tickets**



▶ The Shins

## On sale soon

**▶ The Shins**
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Citi Performing Arts Center Wang Theatre
(On sale Friday)

**▶ Brad Paisley**
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June 3
Comcast Center
(On sale Friday)

**▶ Phish**
June 7-8
DCU Center
(On sale Friday)

**▶ Chicago/The Doobie Brothers**
Aug. 16
Comcast Center
(On sale Friday)

**▶ Barenaked Ladies**
Last Summer on Earth Tour 2012
with Blues Traveler, Big Head Todd & The Monsters, Cracker
Aug. 18
(On sale Saturday)

## Also onstage

### Ben Kweller

**March 23, 6 p.m.**
**The Paradise**
**967 Comm. Ave., Boston**
**$20, 617-562-8800**
**www.thedise.com**

Ben Kweller was a teenage rock prodigy, first coming on the scene at the age of 13 in the early '90s by fronting the band Radish. Much like fellow wunderkind Conor Oberst, he continued to evolve into an ever-more talented singer-songwriter and solo artist, though he stuck closely to his original "sugar metal" approach. Even acoustic, he still uses a distortion pedal!

GEMMA HARRIS

▶ Baldi, second from left, founded Cloud Nothings as a hobby in college.

### Cloud Nothings

**March 25, 8 p.m.**
**Brighton Music Hall**
**158 Brighton Ave., Boston**
**$10, 18+, 617-779-0140**
**www.brightonmusichall.com**

Cloud Nothings, the project of Cleveland's Dylan Baldi, can be lumped in a general fashion with the lo-fi indie rock/pop-punk sound typified by bands like Waaves, Best Coast, Vivian Girls, etc. But Baldi has his own thing going on, one more cerebral and less emotional than those bands. It's also less personality-driven, creating moods with guitars more than vocal affectation. Check out our interview with Baldi from SXSW and more festival coverage at www.metro.us/music.

MATTHEW DINARO

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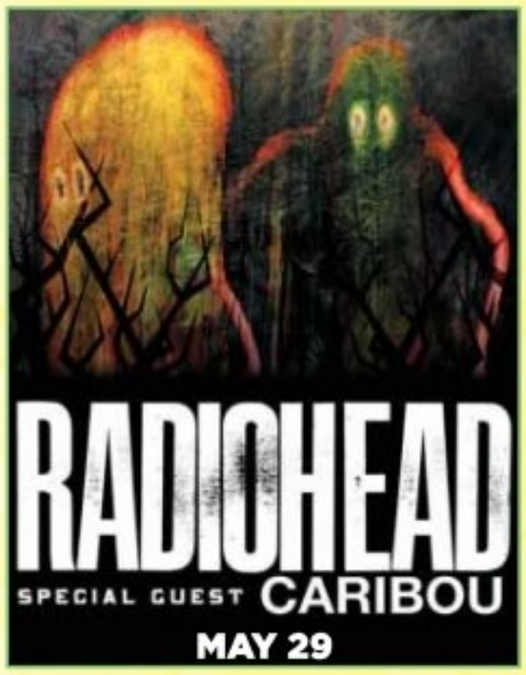

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drinks

# Advice o' the Irish

**Thursty says stay home this St. Patrick's Day! But we know you're going to head out anyway Where to find specials and more**

KITTY ETHRIDGE/METRO

▶ O'Brien's Pub in Allston features wicked whiskey and a band featuring members from another band called Wicked Whiskey.

THURSTY

LUKE O'NEIL
LUKE.ONEIL@METRO.US

I know it's a little counterintuitive to say this in the "going out" section, but I'd like to highly recommend everyone stay home this St. Patrick's Day. The most sidewalk pukingest, fistfighty, vaguely racist stereotype holiday is basically like throwing a birthday party for New Year's Eve on Marathon Monday after all four pro sports teams won a championship on the same day. They should probably change the name to St. Amateur's Day. But since there's no stopping a tidal wave once it's about to crash, especially if it's been dyed green, here are a few places you might consider for your merriment.

The Irish pub industrial complex of the **Briar Group** have, naturally, got big things planned all weekend. St. Patrick's Day, like all holidays (and birthdays), are weeklong events now. **Ned Devine's** (1 Faneuil Hall Market Place, Boston) kicks things off on Friday with a Guinness and Bushmills party with music from the **Galway Guild**, as well as a contest for a trip to Ireland, where St. Patrick's Day is known as "Saturday." Nearby, **The Harp** (85 Causeway St., Boston) opens at 10 a.m. Saturday, which should help you get a head start on blacking out by 1 p.m. when the Bruins face off. Over at **O'Brien's Pub** (3 Harvard Ave., Allston), the music bill features bands with names like Whiskey Kill and Old Hat (and if that doesn't sound boozy enough for you, Old Hat features members of a band called Wicked Whiskey).

The only thing less Irish than St. Patrick's Day is Mexico, but that isn't stopping **Olé** (11 Springfield St., Cambridge) and **Zocalo Cocina Mexicana** (35 Stanhope St., Boston) from bridging the divide with their Mexican-themed Irish specials on Saturday: Try the corned beef and cabbage tacos or the Baby Guinness Shot, a blend of Patron XO Cafe and Irish cream.

**The Common Ground** (83 Harvard Ave., Allston) will feature entertainment all day — from bagpipers to step dancers to the Boston Gaelic Fire Brigade Pipes and Drums players. (And, just guessing here, a DJ playing lots and lots of U2.) Their bangers and mash, boiled dinner and shepherd's pie should help soak up all of the whiskey. Speaking of soaked with whiskey, over in Southie, **Local 149** (149 P St., Boston) is serving a limited release from Crispin Cider, called Marvin, as well as an Irish Stout Yeast Cider (technically from Minneapolis, but at least it's an alternative to the ubiquitous Magners). **The Beehive** (541 Tremont St., Boston), meanwhile, is partnering with the **Boston Irish Tourism Association** for the artsy, French, jazzy bistro version of an authentic St. Patrick's Day, with a performance from The Ivy Leaf, a traditional Irish quartet, and specials like Finaan Haddie smoked fish and chips with malt vinegar aioli. Just like back in the old country.

TAG
theater & arts guide

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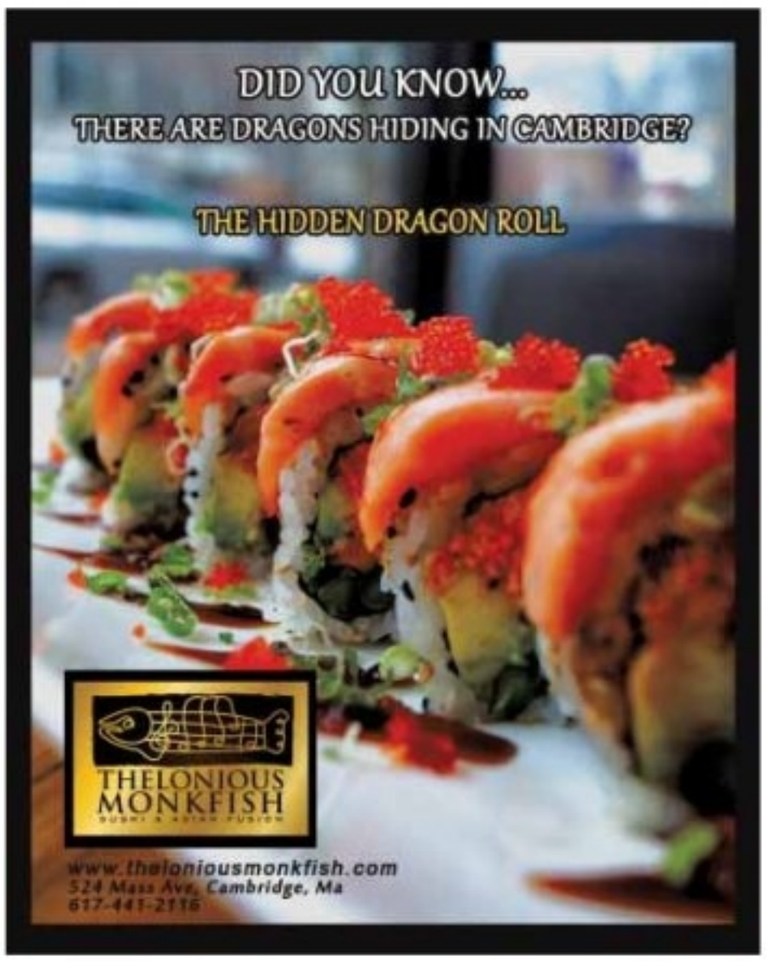


# Say NBA, it's trade day

**It's judgment day for Celtics as Danny Ainge will choose to either stay the course or blow things up Celts' Wilcox out for season Orlando getting quite agitated with Howard**

Dwight Howard trade rumors have heated up in the past 48 hours.

Today could ultimately be quiet, but that's typically not the way things work at the NBA trade deadline.

After the early week dead air, things ramped up Wednesday as New York Knicks head coach Mike D'Antoni resigned and the Dwight Howard trade rumors became scorching hot.

ESPN reported that D'Antoni's departure had to do with "conflicting views of the Knicks' future" and that it was a "mutual decision."

New York had lost six games in a row prior to yesterday, as "Lin-sanity" came to a screeching halt.

As for Howard, league sources told ESPN that the Magic center's sudden request to stay in Orlando actually angered team management. The report said that the Magic were "closer than ever" to trading the star big man.

The Celtics will certainly be in the market for a big body as they announced yesterday that forward Chris Wilcox will miss the remainder of the 2011-12 season. Wilcox will undergo aortic surgery later this month to repair an aortic abnormality.

**1**

**Number of times Danny Ainge has NOT made a significant roster move in January, February or March during his tenure. The lone time was the tanking season of 2007.**

**MATT BURKE**
matthew.burke@metro.us

**3**

**ON TV TODAY**

**NHL HOCKEY**

**BRUINS AT PANTHERS**
7:30 P.M., NESN

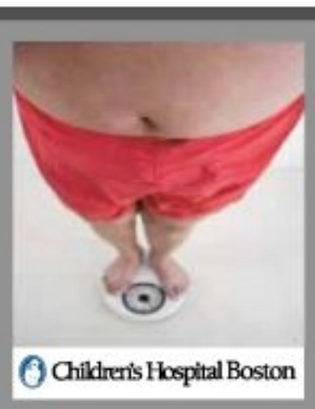
Fanene

## Patriots ink Fanene

The Patriots upgraded their defensive line yesterday by signing free agent Jonathan Fanene, a former player with the Bengals.

The 29-year-old had his best season in 2009 as he started 10 games and recorded six sacks.

The deal was reportedly worth $12 million for three years. Fanene played college football at Utah and is a native of American Samoa. He was drafted in 2005. METRO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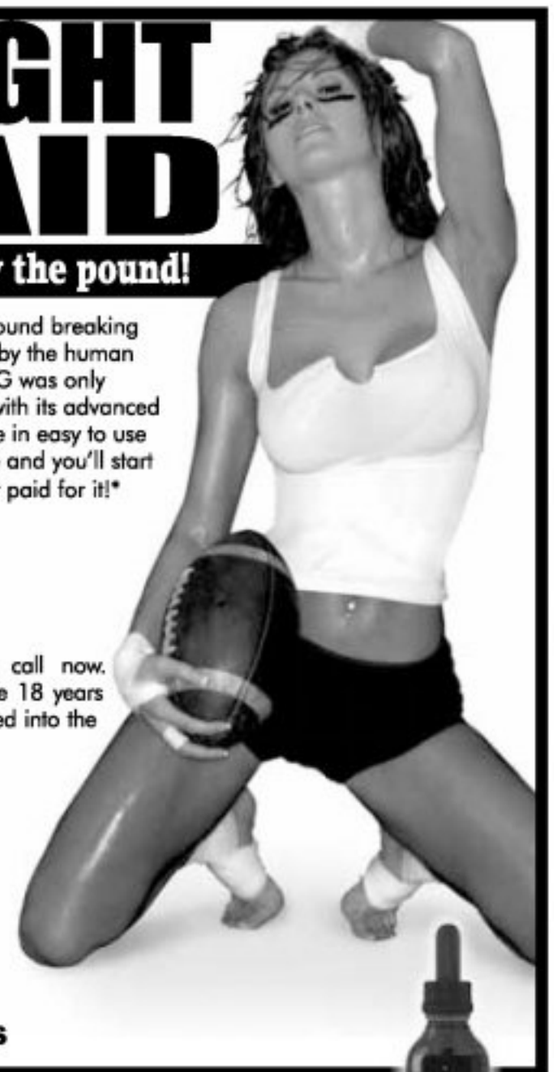


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# The hooky games

## A look at Thursday games you should definitely skip work or school for
## The Madness begins today with a full slate of big-time showdowns

If you call yourself a true college basketball fan, you have played hooky on the first day of the NCAA Tournament — several times. Even lesser devotees have once or twice summoned up a fake cough, made the call to the boss and plopped down for 12 hours of Jim Nantz and the fellas.

No meeting, lecture, conference call or final exam can compare with the wall-to-wall unpredictability of the opening round of the tourney. To help prepare you for the big day off (it's today, just in case you haven't made that call yet), here are the games worth sacrificing your job/tuition:

### EAST: No. 12 Harvard vs. No. 5 Vanderbilt

**Breakdown:** Nerds! Nerds! Nerds! And pretty good basketball players. The Crimson proved their mettle early on by claiming the Battle 4 Atlantis title in impressive fashion and then going on the road to knock off a tough Vermont squad. They proved that was no charade by finishing the 2011 portion of their schedule at 12-1 and gaining a national ranking. They followed that up by racing to the Ivy crown. Now they have to prove that a 66-year NCAA Tournament layoff means nothing by handling a Commodores squad that has all the credentials to go far.

**On TV:** TNT, 4:40 p.m.

### SOUTH: No. 12 VCU vs. No. 5 Wichita State

**Breakdown:** VCU produced one of the event's great runs last season, winning a play-in game at Dayton before rolling all the way to the Final Four. Regardless of how long the Rams last this time around, head coach Shaka Smart is a treat to watch work the sidelines. VCU got a boost last season when it knocked off Wichita State in a Bracketbuster game.

The Shockers are the 15th-highest scoring team in the land and should be better prepared this time.

**On TV:** CBS, 7:15 p.m.

### SOUTH: No. 9 UConn vs. No. 8 Iowa State

**Breakdown:** The defending champion Huskies have a much steeper hill to climb than last year as a three-seed. And they don't have Kemba Walker, the man who did it all for Jim Calhoun last March. UConn will contend with a Cyclones unit led by another man who does it all in Royce White. White leads ISU in scoring, rebounds, assists, blocks and steals. No. 9 seeds have won 54 percent of these encounters over the years.

**On TV:** TBS, 9:20 p.m.

### SOUTH: No. 14 South Dakota vs. No. 3 Baylor

**Breakdown:** If you like scoring, this is the game for you. The Jackrabbits fittingly fill it up, ranking 18th in the nation in scoring. The Bears, who own 10 wins against tournament teams, are 36th in that category. SDSU junior guard Nate Wolters is the key to an upset; he averages 21.3 points, 6.0 assists and 5.2 rebounds.

**On TV:** truTV, 7:27 p.m.

### EAST: No. 13 Montana vs. No. 4 Wisconsin

**Breakdown:** Nobody stifles opposing offenses and slows down the game quite like the Badgers, but that means they often play close games. Expect the Grizzlies to hang around and make this one of those contests where every possession in the second half feels like life or death. With Fab Melo out, Wisconsin could quickly become an East favorite.

**On TV:** TNT, 2:10 p.m.

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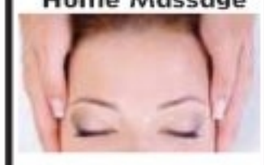

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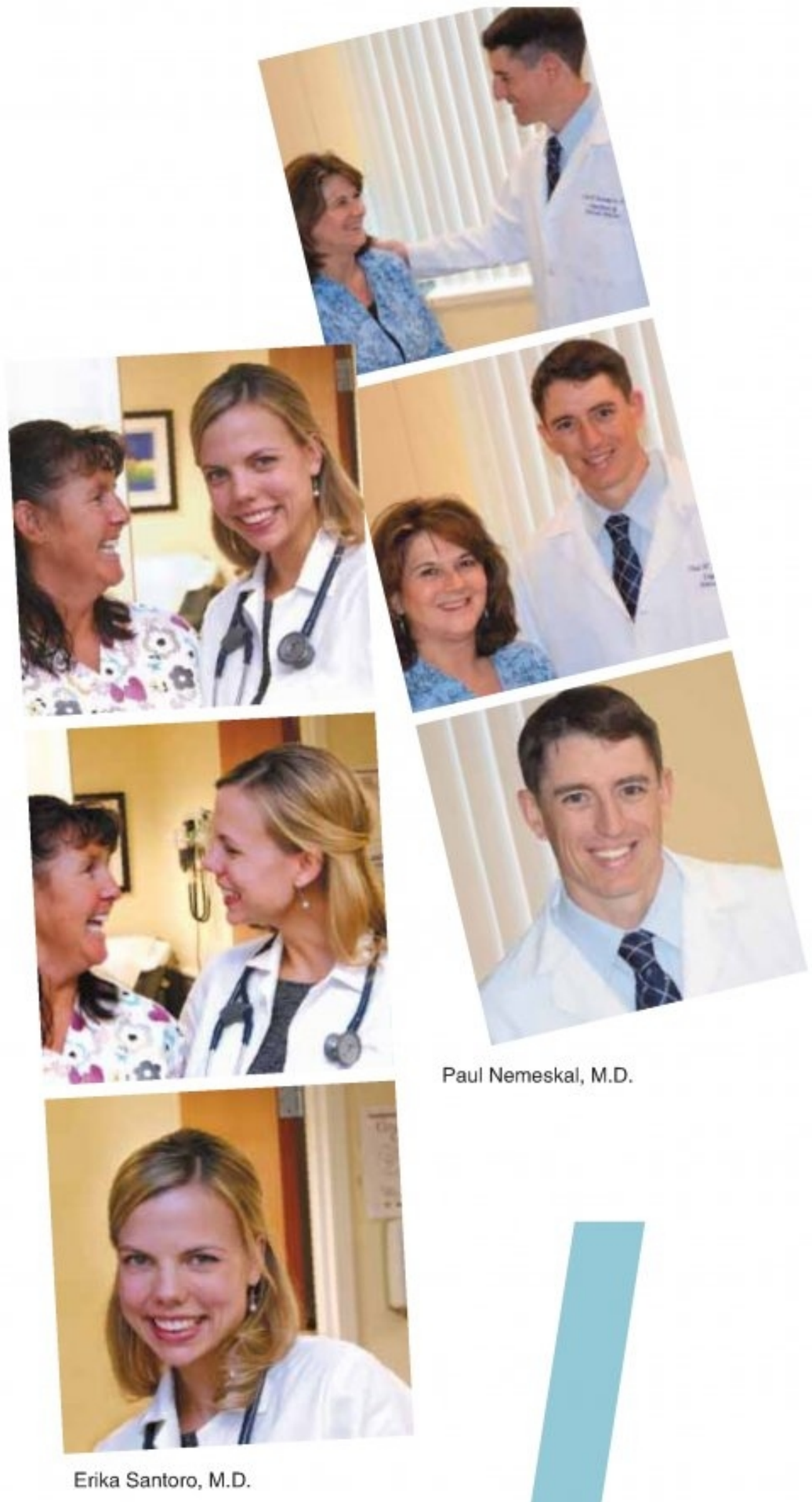

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